

Message Text

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QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 001826

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE, UR, MILI

SUBJECT: CSCE/CBM'S: SOVIET NOTIFICATION OF MILI-
-- TARY EXERCISE "CAUCASUS"

1. THE USSR HAS NOTIFIED ITS FIRST MILITARY EXERCISE UNDER
THE CSCE FINAL ACT. TEXT OF JANUARY 4 NOTIFICATION AND
SUGGESTED PRESS GUIDANCE FOR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN FOLLOW:

2. (QUOTE) THE SOVIET FOREIGN (MILITARY) LIAISON SECTION
PRESENTS THEIR RESPECT TO THE MILITARY ATTACHES AND, ON
THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OF THE USSR
HAS THE HONOR OF FORWARDING NOTIFICATION OF A MILITARY
EXERCISE;

-- IN THE PERIOD FROM 25 JANUARY TO 6 FEBRUARY 1976,
IN THE AREA OF KUTAISI, YEREVAN, TBILISI, A CORPS MILITARY
EXERCISE, DESIGNATED 'CAUCASUS', OF TROOPS OF THE TRANS-
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PAGE 02 STATE 001826

CAUCASUS MILITARY DISTRICT, IS PLANNED WITH THE GOAL OF

WORKING OUT COORDINATION OF VARIOUS BRANCHES OF TROOPS (FORCES) UNDER WINTER CONDITIONS.

-- FORMATIONS AND UNITS OF GROUND FORCES, INCLUDING AIRBORNE AND AIRBORNE ASSAULT ELEMENTS, AND ALSO AIR FORCE FORMATIONS, WILL TAKE PART IN THE EXERCISE.
-- THE TOTAL NUMBER PARTICIPATING IN THE EXERCISE WILL CONSIST OF ABOUT 25,000 PERSONS.

-- THE FOREIGN LIAISON (MILITARY) SECTION OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OF THE USSR TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW OUR ASSURANCES OF HIGH RESPECT. (END QUOTE).

3. TEXT OF DEPARTMENT PRESS GUIDANCE FOLLOWS:

Q. THERE HAVE BEEN PRESS REPORTS THAT THE WEST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS BEEN NOTIFIED OF A SOVIET MANEUVER. HAS THE U.S. RECEIVED SUCH NOTIFICATION?

A. YES. OUR EMBASSY IN MOSCOW WAS GIVEN A NOTE ON JANUARY 4.

Q. IS THE SOVIET ANNOUNCEMENT THE FIRST TIME THAT THEY HAVE NOTIFIED A MANEUVER?

A. THIS IS THE FIRST NOTIFICATION BY THE SOVIET UNION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT OF THE CSCE.

Q. IS THIS THE FIRST TIME A MANEUVER WHICH SHOULD BE NOTIFIED HAS BEEN HELD?

A. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, YES.

Q. HAVE OTHER WARSAW PACT NATIONS NOTIFIED MANEUVERS?

A. NO THEY HAVE NOT. TWO NEUTRAL COUNTRIES - YUGOSLAVIA AND SWITZERLAND - HAVE MADE NOTIFICATIONS, AS HAVE THE U.S. AND ITS NATO ALLIES.

Q. THERE IS ANOTHER KIND OF CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE INVOLVING THE INVITATION OF OBSERVERS TO MANEUVERS. HAVE THE SOVIETS INVITED OBSERVERS TO THESE MANEUVERS?
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PAGE 03 STATE 001826

A. WE HAVE NO INDICATION SO FAR THAT THEY INTEND TO INVITE OBSERVERS. YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT OBSERVERS ARE A SEPARATE QUESTION AND THAT UNDER THE FINAL ACT ONE NEED NOT INVITE OBSERVERS TO EVERY NOTIFIED MANEUVER.

Q. WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO THIS NOTIFICATION? DIDN'T IT LOOK BEFORE LIKE THE SOVIET'S WERE

ACTING IN BAD FAITH ON CSCE?

A.

WE ARE PLEASED WITH THIS EVIDENCE OF THEIR INTENTION TO IMPLEMENT THE CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE PROVISIONS OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT.

Q. CAN WE GET COPIES OF THE TEXT OF THE SOVIET NOTE?

A. WE DO NOT NORMALLY RELEASE TEXTS OF OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS, BUT THE NOTIFIED MANEUVER WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 25 JANUARY TO 6 FEBRUARY IN THE AREAS OF KUTAISSI, YEREVAN AND TBILISI AND WILL INVOLVE APPROXIMATELY 25,000 MEN.

4. MISSION IS AUTHORIZED TO DRAW ON THE ABOVE IN POLADS. PRESS DID NOT QUERY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ON JAN 5 ABOUT NOTIFICATION. Q AND A'S ARE REPEATED AS US CONTRIBUTION TO IF-ASKED GUIDANCE FOR NATO SPOKESMAN.

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